GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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TWO MODERN "LIBERTY BELLS" OF MEXICO

These old bells were melted and cast into cannon by the forces of General Manuel Chao at Parral, Chihuahua, Mexico, in 1913 (see Bulletin No. 5).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Malmedy and Eupen: Two Towns That Germany Lost to Belgium Hold an Election

RECENT elections in Eupen and Malmedy of local officials were watched with keen interest both by Belgium and Germany as weather vanes to determine the sentiment of the people in these two towns which were severed from Germany and awarded to Belgium by the treaty of Versailles.

Both Eupen and Malmedy are hill towns. The first has 14,000, and the second 4,000 inhabitants; while the whole 382 square miles transferred six years ago has not more than 60,000 people.

The Towns Are Near Liege

No one of the present generation can forget Liege, so it is easy to locate Eupen and Malmedy by fixing the former 25 miles east, and the latter 25 miles southeast, of that martyred Belgian town. Eupen can almost claim to be a suburb of Aix-la-Chapelle, or Aachen, as the Germans call it. From Eupen the Germans stepped across the border on August 5, 1914. Malmedy is farther south along the German-Belgium frontier, which is only 40 miles long. Directly across the line from Malmedy is Spa. Not a spa, but The Spa, whose health springs attracted crowned heads of Europe during the first part of the 19th century.

At Versailles, in 1919, Belgium wanted 14 cantons in the so-called Eifel district of Germany adjoining the Belgian border. She claimed them as lost Walloon territory taken by Prussia by the Treaty of Vienna in 1815. Belgium is half Walloon and half Flemish. The Walloon half is the forested uplands nearest France. Walloon speech resembles French and the religion is Catholic. Flemings, on the other hand, live in the fertile plain, are Protestants, and speak a Dutch language. At one time, Walloon families may have outnumbered all others in "beyond-the-border" cantons but the Germans changed that. Indeed, Eupen, a wool-weaving center, is said to be German now but Malmedy, isolated in the hills, is still Walloon.

Five Hundred People Without a Country

Neighbor to Malmedy and Eupen is Moresnet, which is a freak of border barter. In neutral Moresnet live five hundred men, women and children without a country.

The town sits over a zinc mine which has been worked for hundreds of years. When it came to laying a border line neither Belgium nor Germany would consent to the other owning Moresnet and its mine. They compromised to create neutral Moresnet. It is not a state, yet it belongs to no one. Moresnet is measured in acres instead of square miles, 1,400 acres according to one authority, and 800 acres according to another. One year it has a German burgomaster, the next a Belgian burgomaster. Customs revenue is collected by German agents and divided between the two countries.

A Rush On Moresnet

Moresnet came near to being overcrowded shortly before the World War because its inhabitants, being citizens of no country, did not have to serve in

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MOUNT VERNON FROM THE AIR

This National Shrine has among its priceless relics the key to the Bastille, emblem of the French Revolution, which was presented to George Washington by Lafayette (see Bulletin No. 5).

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How the Tree Cans Sunshine

ONE of the romantic features of the meeting this summer of the British Association for the Advancement of Science was the coming of a scientist from India with instruments so delicate and finely adjusted that he had to carry them on his lap when he was on railroad trains lest the vibrations should injure them. These instruments he used to demonstrate the lifelike qualities of plants, and especially to show that trees, in many ways, are mechanisms that transcend human ingenuity.

Man is apt to consider the tree according to its uses to him. The home owner thinks of it in terms of lumber, the sportsman looks to it for fishing poles or golf clubs, the painter is concerned with the varnish it yields, the musician considers its qualities for rosin or the making of violins, the publisher watches its yield of pulpwood, the summer picnicker asks only its shade.

Pumping Is One Tree Function

And so the list might be multiplied, for trees donate literally thousands of commodities to mankind's use. But what of the tree from its own point of view?

A tree pumps a water supply to its crown, even though that crown be 300 feet or more in the sky. Then it completes the cycle of circulation by sending the water back down as sap, loaded with food to build up the living part of the trunk, the sheath of new bark. It also fortifies its bark overcoat with a new layer every year.

Moreover, the tree is a self-operating chemical laboratory possessing "trade" secrets yet unknown to the best human chemists. With water, mineral matter and carbonic acid gas from the air it manufactures its food, part of which is stored away as wood. If you would know how much of this product is made out of air and water and how much is mineral matter sluiced through root and cell canals from the ground, cut a block of wood, weigh it, burn it, and then weigh the ashes. The difference is what a tree manufactures out of insubstantial air and water. The warmth from the fire is literally canned sunshine released by combustion.

The tree's chemical laboratory requires, in place of gas and electric power, light and heat from the sun. So it spreads a net of marvelous mesh to catch the sunlight and heat. Man calls the net leaves.

Defies Extremes of Climate

In the Temperate Zone, at least, a tree is a more stalwart individual than all members of the animal kingdom and most fellow members of the plant kingdom. What animal, for example, can go from a New England summer to a New England winter without putting on heavier clothing? Most plants curl up and die. The tree turns off the water system to keep it from freezing, hauls in its sunlight net (winter sun is not so much, anyway) and faces the music of the bitterest northwest winds.

Man has taken the olive branch as the emblem of peace but there is little peace in the whole arboreal family. A tree not only fends for itself, it fights for itself. If trees did not fight for themselves man would have little use for

either army. Belgians and Germans wishing to escape military service flocked to Moresnet until the godparent countries put a stop to that. A glimpse into Moresnet's economic life is afforded by its taxation policy. Funds to run this village without a country are obtained through subsidy from the mining company and a license on draft dogs!

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THE VOLCANO POPOCATEPETL, FROM THE VALLEY OF MEXICO

The correct way to pronounce the name of this beautiful mountain is Popo-ca-tepetl. The Aztec Indians joined the modifying adjective to its noun with a preposition just as we join the nouns or two parts of a compound sentence with a conjunction. The "ca" in the word Popocatepetl is the conjunction which joins "popo," meaning smoking, to "tepetl," meaning hill (see Bulletin No. 4).

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Ways That Are Different in Paris

FOLLOWING reports of demonstrations against a few Americans in Paris last summer, President Coolidge reminded American travelers that they have an obligation, as guests, to conform to the customs of the countries they visit.

Even Americans who stay at home should approach other ways and habits with tolerance, and not be too quick to criticize customs that are different from those at home. Usually there is a reason.

Paris is an example. Sometimes the Parisian way seems most welcome, at other times it seems strange, but in either event, one has not far to look to find there is a reason back of every custom.

A Novel Meal Check Device

At times the Parisian seems to have outdone his American friends in efficiency. For example there is the billing device of some of the larger sidewalk cafes. Each plate and cup bears a price mark—50 centimes, one franc, and so forth—and the refreshments are served in containers bearing the proper cost mark. If a second cup of chocolate is ordered, the empty cup will be set to one side, and another cup bearing the price mark served.

When the customer is ready to pay he does not have to depend on the memory of the waiter, or scan a bill of fare, nor does the waiter have to juggle with checks. The addition of the empty containers is obviously the amount of his bill.

In contrast is the rather cumbersome method of booking a seat in a Paris theater. In some theaters, at least, one must first purchase the right to sit in a certain part of the house—the orchestra, balcony, or a box. This coupon then must be taken to another desk to have a seat assigned. Even if one buys a designated seat, this exchange always is necessary.

Finding a Theater Seat

The patron next turns to a head usher, who leads him to the program seller, and after he has purchased a program, a custom which also prevails in English theaters, he encounters the peculiar Parisian practice of having an usher charge to show him to a seat. And there is little hope of his finding his own seat because seats are identified only by numbers, not by rows which are lettered, and then numbered by seats.

The American, impatient at his circuitous progress to his seat, and having reached into his pocket three or four times so far, is apt to become annoyed and conclude he is being overcharged. This often is his feeling even when he was buying a seat which, at the recent exchange rate of about 3 cents for the franc, cost him less than $2, even adding in the price of program, the price of being shown to his seat, and the 50 centimes collected if he went to a lavatory between the acts.

However, the Parisians have reasons for each of the charges; for there is not one, but there are several taxes, levied on theater seats and these vary with the locations in the house.

Another difficulty which the visitor in Paris might as well make up his

them. A tree is a bush on stilts. In the tree world the upper dog wins, so it is usually the tree which battles its neighbor for light with a better and longer stilt that lives and thrives.

Extinct Trees Provide Coal

While it is easy to visualize the capture of sun heat by a tree and its release on one's shins from a fireplace, it is more difficult to appreciate the heat we get from prehistoric trees. Fossil forms in coal show that trees were important and perhaps the chief dwellers of the rank jungles that laid down their lives in the carboniferous age to be fuel for 1926. The tree forms of that era were different from those we know; many of them gigantic ferns and palmlike trees. But the pines, which control half of the world's forests to-day, are close relatives of prominent prehistoric tree families.

One of the densest jungles on earth to-day lies along the Matago River in Guatemala. Should Nature, by the process of the Coal Age, transform that jungle into a coal seam, it would be only a few inches thick. What a forest of tree life it must have been to produce the seams of coal which we mine to-day! One of the thickest on record is 66 feet.

Colors From Prehistoric Times

While Nature was storing away the sun heat captured by the prehistoric jungles, Nature also put away the color of that tropic world. Within the last 50 years chemists have discovered vats of every imaginable color concealed in gummy black coal tar. Modern styles for women's clothing quickly took possession of these color "mines" so our avenues are brilliant with the hues of luxuriant herbage which we may imagine beautified our earth millions and millions of years ago.

The total value of products of contemporary and prehistoric trees produced and imported annually in the United States is more than 11 billions of dollars. This figure is necessarily approximate and decidedly conservative. Major products that roll up this total are: Paper, lumber, coal, rubber, coke oven by-products, chocolate and cacao, canned fruits, rayon, dried fruits, fresh fruits, turpentine and rosin, coal tar products, and nuts.

Bulletin No 2, November 1, 1926.

Form for Renewal of Bulletin Requests

Many requests for the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS were made for the year ending with this issue. If you desire the Bulletins continued kindly notify The Society promptly. The attached form may be used:

School Service Department,
National Geographic Society,
Washington, D. C.

Kindly send.....copies of the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS for the school year beginning with the issue of....., for classroom use, to

Name .....

City..... State.....

Address for sending Bulletins.....

I am a teacher in.....school.....grade

Enclose 25 cents for each annual subscription.

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Cross-Word Puzzles on the Map of the World

EQUAL in interest to cross-word puzzles is the game of map hunting. The by-product of cross-word puzzle is an increased vocabulary. The by-product of map hunting is a vocabulary of words from a score or more of ancient and modern languages, and a fresh point of view of geography.

Problems may be selected from the news of the day or from the map itself. Chinese armies recently were fighting for possession of Peking. The question arises: "What does Peking mean to the Chinese?"

Equidistant from Peking are places named Nanyuan and Peiyuan. The syllable "pe" or "pei" is a familiar one in Chinese names. So is "nan." Everyone will think of Nanking. Further inspection of the map shows that Peking bears the same relation to Nanking, as Nanyuan does to Peiyuan; that is, the "pe" is north and the "nan" is south. When we remember from history that Nanking was one of the favorite capitals of China, the puzzle is solved; Peking means the north capital and Nanking means the south capital.

The Puzzle of Three "D's"

Not only Chinese words but Russian, Spanish, Arabic and words of many other languages also, may be learned as readily by exploring expeditions—on a map.

Grade school pupils in geography learn the major rivers of Europe. What satisfaction when Russia finally is reached, for there ran the rivers of the three D's; the Dniester, Dnieper and the Don! They are easy. Yet the repetition of the D should arouse suspicion. An adult intellect can see that there is something wrong between the "d" and the "n" of the first two names. A vowel has been left out. Perhaps it is the "o" left in Don; Doniester, Donieper—three Dons for three rivers. Don must be Russian for "river." The map of Russia also shows that Dniester is south of the Dnieper, so one may correctly assume that what the Russians really mean is Lower River, Upper River, and the River.

Thoughout the desert regions of northeast Africa and into Arabia, the map explorer is confronted with the term "Bir" before names indicating small places; Bir Garrab in Egypt, Bir Soluk in Cyrenaica, Bir-el-Melosah on the Damascus-Bagdad post route. "Bir" makes one think of a famous Biblical name, Beersheba. In the desert a community exists either where there is running water to make a pool or a well to supply water by bucket. Running water is so rare in the desert that it is generally marked by a large community, an oasis, and therefore, "bir" probably is Arabic for well.

The Wells of Beersheba

Indeed Beersheba confirms this. Sheba's wells were seven. They supply water to the thirsty to-day even as they did to Abraham and Sarah. In Beersheba Jacob robbed Esau of his birthright and to the crossroads of the "birs" came Elijah fleeing from the original Jezebel. On the limestone walls of the wells are deep lines worn by thousands upon thousands of ropes, a mute history of the venerable place.

Before leaving this section of the map one should learn easily that a

mind to accept is that his hotel room, no matter what the price, nor how elegantly it may be furnished and provided with every other comfort, is not going to have any soap. One explanation of this lack may be in the fact that all toilet articles are expensive, being heavily taxed; a more plausible one, in view of the fact that good Paris hotels stop at no expense or pains for their guests' comfort, is that the Parisian regards the soap he uses much as we do a toothbrush, as a peculiarly personal and individual thing, not to be provided by someone else.

Ice is scarce in Paris, as it is in England. In neither London nor Paris is the climate such that cold drinks are necessary to comfort; anyway the Europeans may be right in their belief that chilled drinks impede the processes of digestion. Many American doctors concur; and nobody will argue with the French about gastronomic topics.

File Case For Napkins

It is almost unnecessary to inquire, "Where is a good place to eat in Paris?" One can hardly go wrong if he visits a Paris cafe, serving Parisians, and having the earmarks of a reasonably good establishment. Here again the Parisian habit, which prevails all over Europe, of allocating small charges which we simply sum up in "overhead" may give rise to misunderstanding. At the price of the franc in recent months one may eat, in any French hotel or cafe, which is not one of the few places especially designed to cater to "foreigners," a bountiful meal, prepared by the world's best chefs, at a price which seems ridiculously low. At French cafes which are world-famous for their cuisine it is hard for one to spend more than the equivalent of a dollar for a meal. Yet the charges on the bill, included in that amount, for cover, service and even for napkin, being unexpected, loom large in the visitor's mind.

The extreme thrift of the French is nowhere better illustrated than in some of the smaller cafes where regular patrons file their napkins in a sort of rack, suggestive of the rows of shaving mugs in our old-time barber shops, and pay once a week for the laundry of that bit of linen.

On a street car in Paris one pays only for the distance he wishes to ride. This is done by zoning the routes, and requires considerable bookkeeping on the part of the conductor, and also obliges the passenger to keep his receipt to be shown on demand, if he remains on the car to another zone.

Where Taxi Troubles Arise

Few visitors patronize street cars; the taxis are too convenient and too cheap. The tariffs are ridiculously low. Here again, however, arise misunderstandings because, after 11 o'clock at night, taxi drivers can put down their white metal flag (which ordinarily means that the taxi is empty and is required to accept any fare at the regular tariff) and may charge double fare. Unfortunately the meters do not register the excess fare, the driver usually cannot speak enough English to explain the reason for asking twice as much as the meter indicates, and there ensue frequent arguments.

No one can be in Paris long without being impressed by the courtesy of the policemen; Americans, however, may fail to note, or noting the fact they may rebel at the custom, which is to touch one's hat to a policeman when asking him a question. Now the Frenchman, who is one of the most liberty-loving and independent persons in the world, sees nothing demeaning in that practice. And anyone who does it receives a salute and a bow in return which more than atone for his pains.

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Other Independence Days

MANY visitors to the Sesquicentennial at Philadelphia this summer saw not only the huge reproduction of the Liberty Bell on the Exposition grounds but visited also Independence Hall to see the original. They read the inscription, "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof," on the huge bell which tolled out to the world its message that the independence of the Thirteen Colonies had been declared.

That day stands not only as the day of freedom of the original Thirteen Colonies, but as a prophecy of the forthcoming independence of practically every portion of the Americas, as well as of liberty-loving peoples in other parts of the world. To-day most nations celebrate a day which has a particular significance in marking the time when the light of liberty broke upon them.

Bastille Day in France

On July 14 the French celebrate their Fete Nationale, or Bastille Day—the day in 1789 on which the mad, frenzied, half-starved, and persecuted mob of wretched and miserable humanity which haunted the hovels in the Faubourg Saint Antoine pulled down almost with their bare hands the prison which had grown to mean to them the symbol of their oppression.

To-day on the site a bronze column marks the spot where this huge fortress shut away thousands of prisoners, many of them in dark cells and dungeons to which they had been consigned without trial and from which they were dragged at intervals for exquisite torture. The mob killed the guards, carried the prisoners on their shoulders in triumph through the streets, and scattered the prison records to the winds. Lafayette obtained the key of the Bastille and sent it to George Washington, whose fight for liberty had served to help kindle the spark of freedom in France.

When Napoleon put such a decided kink in the doctrine of the divine right of kings, the feeling of unrest manifested itself in the colonies of most of the European nations. One of the mightiest reactions came in the colonies of Spain to the south of us.

Mexico's Liberty Bell

Miguel Hidalgo, curate of the little village of Colores, Mexico, rang the bell of his parish church early on the morning of September 16, 1810, to tell his compatriots that they must take from that moment their stand in the cause of freedom. That day is now celebrated as the Mexican Independence Day, though the emotional and volatile followers of the priest deserted him by the thousands and allowed him to be taken prisoner. His head was severed and suspended for ten years upon a spike from a corner of the Alhondiga de Granaditas in Guanajuato where, during his earlier successes, he had made a spectacular stand.

The Independence Day of the Central American countries is just one day before that of Mexico, though the actual drawing up of the Acta de Independencia occurred eleven years later. Pronunciamentos had begun to appear in various cities in Central America as early as 1811, and because Spain on account of her wars elsewhere was unable to send armies to Central America, a blow was struck for freedom whenever it was possible and many

"wady" is a stream bed, dry most of the year. Another Arabic word which now frequently pops into the daily news is "Jebel." The Jebel or Gebal Druses who are troubling the French in Syria are the "Mountain" Druses. Jebel marks many mountain ranges in Africa and "Jeb" appears beside single peaks. At the other end of the Mediterranean is Gebal-al-Tarik—now Gibraltar.

Your seasoned map explorer never trusts spelling. He trusts sounds far more. He will "hear" a similarity between "wady" and the first syllable of Guadalquiver. The "wady-al-Kebir," the great river, is just as much a memorial to the Arabic invasion of Spain as the halls of Granada. Guadalajara, in Mexico, is an Arabic "wady" name that shipped to the New World on a Spanish conquistador's galleon.

The "Great River River"

One of the favorite lessons of the geography classroom is that Yangtze Kiang River is a gross error. Since "kiang" means "great river," the poor Chinaman struggling with English would be a trifle confused to hear an American say what would sound to his ears "Yangtze great river river." The same precautions must be taken with "ho" meaning a river not so great, like the Howang Ho.

A similar situation is suspected in India when one discovers numerous "gangas" as labels for streams in Ceylon. Ganges is not far different from "ganga" and both mean river, so Gangas rightfully should stand alone like the "Don" of Russia and the "Avon" in England. Avon is an old Celt word for river.

Bulletin No. 4, November 1, 1926.

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THE MAMMOTH WASHINGTON OAK

This New Orleans specimen is reputed to be the largest oak in the United States (see Bulletin No. 2).

of the natives and creoles died in the cause of liberty. Finally, in 1821, the representative of Spain in Guatemala joined the rebels and on September 15 independence was declared. The other countries immediately followed suit in a few days, but all of them observe the earlier date.

Bolivar Liberator of Five Nations

Before independence was gained in Central America, revolution was rife in practically every portion of South America. The royal Governor of Venezuela was deposed on April 19, 1810, and a popular council was selected to rule. The next year Bolivar, the creator of five of the South American nations, was instrumental in getting a formal declaration of independence drawn up and a republican constitutional form of government was declared on July 5. Venezuela decrees a holiday on each of these days.

When Ferdinand VII fell from the throne of Spain upon the coming of Napoleon, the Chileans, seeing that their chance for national freedom had come, organized on September 18, 1810, a government for the period that France should hold Spain, and they now consider this the date of the independence. The other Spanish-owned countries had caught the epidemic and lined up as independent republics. Peru and Bolivia were among the last to resist the authority of Spain.

Brazil, wearying of Portuguese princes, proclaimed its independence of the mother country on September 7, 1823, although it submitted to several of them thereafter as Brazilian Emperors.

Bulletin No. 5, November 1, 1926.

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A MODERN LINK IN AN HISTORIC FRIENDSHIP

On Bastille Day, 1923, was dedicated this memorial erected by the National Geographic Society in the little French town of Cantigny, the place where American overseas troops received their first baptism of fire. Lafayette's aid in our Revolutionary War, L'Enfant's design for laying out our Capital City, and Americans fighting on French soil during the World War, all contributed to an international friendship which has endured for a century and a half (see Bulletin No. 5).